

# ACNE & DIET

The Western Diet has been connected with acne for various reasons. High sugar & high fat foods have been linked to acne, & diets rich in antioxidants, such as the Mediterranean diet may be protective against acne. Your diet changes the hormones & inflammation in your skin, which may increase your acne if you are already at risk (aka genetics). Diet has an impact on acne because some foods increase testosterone and DHT (Bad Testosterone) in the skin, while other foods increase the inflammatory pathways in the skin.

## DAIRY

Dairy increases DHT production in the skin, which is the underlying trigger for most acne. For many patients with acne, avoidance of dairy is the only support they need to keep the inflammation in their skin low. Avoid whey protein, milk, cheese & other products made with dairy. Butter is likely tolerable, but there are better fats such olive oil that may be more beneficial than butter.

## CHOCOLATE

Chocolate has been shown to increase the risk of acne & the severity of acne. Studies have even looked at 99% pure chocolate & have found an association.

## HEALTHY FATS AND OILS

The inflammation in the skin that triggers acne can be countered by anti-inflammatory fats in the diet. Use olive oil, flax, avocado & coconut oil liberally in the diet to help lower inflammation. Nuts & seeds are also a healthy source of fats. Include 2 TBSP of pumpkin seeds per day for the addition of zinc to the diet. Studies show that patients who eat more fish have lower acne scores & patients who eat more nuts have improved acne.

## GROUND FLAX

Ground flax lowers circulating testosterone & can help lower acne. It is also a high fibre food. 2 heaping TBSP is the dose required for lowering testosterone.

## FIBER

Aim for a target of 35g of fibre per day to support better hormone balance & reduce circulating hormone levels. Increase your soluble fibre from fruits & vegetables. By increasing fibre & antioxidants found in fruits & vegetables you support your skin's health while replacing other high sugar foods in your diet.

## WHOLE GRAINS AND LOW GLYCEMIC INDEX FOODS

Refined grains & sugars spike the hormone insulin after eating & may trigger acne. Some studies have shown that if we eat more whole grains, less refined grains & less simple sugars such as juice & candy that acne may improve.